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STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
BOARD OF EXAMINERS FOR NURSING

Department of Public Health and Addiction Services v.

**Heather Patron, R.N.**

Registered Nurse License No. E56002

171 Fox Street

Bridgeport CT 06605

CASE PETITION NO. 940802-10-075

MEMORANDUM OF DECISION

INTRODUCTION

The Board of Examiners for Nursing (hereinafter the "Board") was presented by the Department of Public Health and Addiction Services (hereinafter the "Department") with a Statement of Charges dated September 2, 1994 and a Motion for Summary Suspension dated September 6, 1994.

(Department Exhibit 2) The Statement of Charges alleged violations of certain provisions of Chapter 378 of the General Statutes of Connecticut by Heather Patron (hereinafter the "Respondent").

Based on the allegations in the Statement of Charges and accompanying affidavits and reports, the Board found that the continued nursing practice of the Respondent represented a clear and immediate danger to public health and safety. On September 8, 1994, the Board ordered, pursuant to its authority under §19a-17 of the General Statutes of Connecticut, that the registered nurse license of the Respondent be summarily suspended pending a final determination by the Board of the allegations contained in the Statement of Charges. (Department Exhibit 2)

The Board issued a Notice of Hearing dated September 8, 1994 scheduling a hearing for September 21, 1994. (Department Exhibit 2) The hearing took place on September 21, 1994 in Room 2-A, Legislative Office Building, Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut.

Each member of the Board involved in this decision attests that he/she was present at the hearing or has reviewed the record, and that this decision is based entirely on the record and his/her specialized professional knowledge in evaluating the evidence.

### FACTS

Based on the testimony given and the exhibits offered into evidence, the Board made the following findings of fact:

1. Heather Patron, hereinafter referred to as the Respondent, was issued Registered Nurse License Number E56002 on October 1, 1993 and was at all times referred to in the Statement of Charges the holder of said license. (Department Exhibit 2-C)
2. The Department's attempts at serving the Respondent with the Summary Suspension Order, Notice of Hearing, and Statement of Charges were unsuccessful. The Department attempted service by certified mail to the Respondent's address of record as well as service by sheriff. The Respondent did not inform the Department of any change of the address of record. (Department Exhibit 1) (Hearing Transcript, September 21, 1994, pp. 2-8)
3. The Respondent was not present at the hearing and was not represented by counsel. (Hearing Transcript, September 21, 1994, p. 3)
4. That on June 9, 1994 the Respondent gave a sworn written statement to State of Connecticut, Department of Consumer Protection, Drug Control Agents John Gadea, Jr., and Alexandra Mathiason. (Department Exhibit 2-A)
5. That the Respondent admitted in her sworn statement that beginning in November 1993, while working as a registered nurse at Bridgeport Hospital, Bridgeport, Connecticut, she was under a great deal of stress which resulted in her beginning to drink heavily and to subsequently abuse and become addicted to Heroin. (Department Exhibit 2-A)

6. That the Respondent admitted in her sworn statement that while working as a registered nurse at Bridgeport Hospital she diverted the controlled substance Morphine by replacing it with normal saline. She further admitted that she diverted the controlled substance Demerol and falsified medication records by documenting that Demerol she diverted for her own use had been administered to patients. (Department Exhibit 2-A) (Hearing Transcript, September 21, 1994, p. 12)
7. That the Respondent admitted in her sworn statement that she abused narcotics while on duty and had used Heroin prior to reporting to work, which affected her performance as a nurse. (Department Exhibits 2-A) (Hearing Transcript, September 21, 1994, pp. 12-13)
8. That on or about May 1994 the Respondent underwent detoxification and twenty-one (21) day rehabilitation. The Respondent resumed using Heroin on or about June 4, 1994. (Department Exhibit 2-A) (Hearing Transcript, September 21, 1994, p. 12)

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In consideration of the above Findings of Fact, the following conclusions are rendered:

Heather Patron held a valid registered nurse license in the State of Connecticut at all times referenced in the Statement of Charges.

The hearing was held in accordance with Chapters 54 and 368a of the General Statutes of Connecticut as well as 19-2a-1 through 19-2a-30 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

PARAGRAPH 2 of the Statement of Charges alleges that on or about November 1993, and at subsequent times, while working as a registered nurse at Bridgeport Hospital, the Respondent

- "a. diverted Morphine and Demerol;
- b. abused or utilized to excess one or more of said medications;
- c. failed to completely or properly or accurately make documentations in the medical or hospital records;
- d. falsified one or more Controlled Substance Receipt Records;
- e. abused or utilized to excess heroin; and/or
- f. abused or utilized to excess alcohol."

PARAGRAPH 3 of the Statement of Charges alleges that the Respondent is addicted to Heroin.

The Respondent was not present at the hearing to answer to these charges. (Hearing Transcript, September 21, 1994, p. 3)

The General Statutes of Connecticut §20-99(b) prohibits conduct which fails to conform to the accepted standards of the nursing profession, which includes "... (2) illegal conduct, incompetence or negligence in carrying out usual nursing functions... (5) abuse or excessive use of drugs, including alcohol, narcotics or chemicals... (6) fraud or material deception in the course of professional services or activities...."

Based on its findings, the Board concludes that the Respondent's conduct as specified in the Statement of Charges, Paragraphs 2 and 3 is proven and that said conduct violates the General Statutes of Connecticut §20-99(b)(2), (5) and (6). Therefore, the Respondent is subject to disciplinary action pursuant to §19a-17 of the General Statutes of Connecticut.

#### ORDER

Pursuant to its authority under §19a-17 and §20-99 of the General Statutes of Connecticut, the Board of Examiners for Nursing hereby orders the following:

1. That for Paragraph 2 and Paragraph 3 of the Statement of Charges the Respondent's registered nurse license, No. E56002, be ~~revoked~~.
2. Revocation shall become effective on the date this Memorandum of Decision is signed by the Chairperson of the Board of Examiners for Nursing.

The Respondent, Heather Patron, is hereby directed to immediately surrender Registered Nurse License No. E56002 to the Board of Examiners for Nursing, Department of Public Health and Addiction Services, 150 Washington Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06106.

The Board of Examiners for Nursing finds the misconduct regarding Paragraph 2 and Paragraph 3 is severable and each specific offense warrants the disciplinary action imposed.

The Board of Examiners for Nursing hereby informs the Respondent, Heather Patron, and the Department of Public Health and Addiction Services of the State of Connecticut of this decision.

Dated at Hartford, Connecticut this ~~23th~~ day of January, 1995.

BOARD OF EXAMINERS FOR NURSING

By

Janice Thibodeau

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